

REVIEWS

Luis López. 2012. *Indefinite Objects. Scrambling, Choice Functions and Differential Marking*. Cambridge, MA: The MIT Press. xiii + 188 pp.

Reviewed by Alina Tigău*

In *Indefinite Objects. Scrambling, Choice Functions and Differential Marking*, Luis López makes an important contribution to the study of Spanish indefinite object marking and to the study of indefinite object marking in general. The book also allows for a more nuanced view of the syntax-semantics interface in that it puts forth a new and interesting theory concerning the mapping of structure onto semantic interpretation. Thus, while more traditional approaches (e.g. Diesing 1992) advocate a direct mapping, López argues that configuration is subjected to a mode of syntactic composition which, in turn, yields the interpretation: interpretation obtains from syntactic position via type-shifting.

The book consists of a “Preface” (p. ix), “Acknowledgments” (p. xiii), four chapters, two appendices (pp. 65 and 151), “Notes” (pp. 155-162), “References” (pp. 163-170) and an “Index” (pp. 171-172).

The “Preface” (p. ix) briefly acquaints the reader with the main puzzles concerning the polyvalent behavior of indefinites with respect to (scopal) specificity effects as well as with some previous approaches to this subject matter (Bossong 1985, Diesing 1992, Reinhart 1997, Chung and Ladusaw 2004, Aissen 2005). It also presents the general aims and main contributions of the book: (i) a novel theory of the syntax-semantics interface, which argues against a rigid *syntactic position-semantic interpretation* mapping and to show that syntactic configuration has the actual effect of limiting the possible modes of semantic composition which, in turn, limits the range of possible semantic representations; (ii) providing analyses for some novel data concerning Differential Object Marking (DOM); (iii) a new and more comprehensive account for the already existing DOM data which have lacked a satisfactory account

Chapter 1, “Introduction: Remarks on the grammar of indefinite objects” (pp. 1-30), deals extensively with several theoretical and empirical puzzles (e.g. indefinites may outscope conditionals which are strong islands for extraction; DOM has interpretive consequences for the indefinite object it marks: in Spanish, accusative A has the property of widening scope) that indefinite objects present and with three traditions that have tried to tackle some of these puzzles: Diesing (1992 and 1996), Diesing and Jelinek (1995)¹, Reinhart (1997)² a.o., and the DOM tradition (Bossong 1985)³.

* University of Bucharest, Department of English, alina_mihaela_tigau@yahoo.com.

¹ Diesing (1992 and 1996), Diesing and Jelinek (1995) link specific interpretation to a certain position inside the syntactic tree. Along the lines of Milsark (1974), they distinguish between strong and weak indefinites. The latter are not quantifiers proper but variables which need to be bound by a quantifier e.g. a universal QP, an existential QP etc. At LF, these indefinites are argued to remain within the VP where they get bound by the QP. They are mapped into the nuclear scope and receive a weak/non-presuppositional interpretation. Strong indefinites on the other hand are QPs and as such raise out of the VP into TP creating a Heimian tripartite structure (Quantifier > Restrictor > Nuclear Scope): the restrictor is presuppositional and thus the strong indefinite is interpreted as specific. Evidence that objects scramble out of the VP comes from adverbs and the position which these adverbs are said to occupy i.e. the upper limit of the VP. Thus, objects which are

Along the lines of Diesing (1992 and 1996), López maintains that configuration is crucial for interpretation. Nevertheless, against Diesing, López concludes that although there is a correlation between the syntactic position of the indefinite and the possibility of specific interpretation, this correlation is not a direct one. This hypothesis seems to be substantiated by the behavior of Spanish indefinites: (short-)scrambled indefinites are not necessarily specific i.e. they may be specific but they do not need to be so. Against the main tenets of the DOM tradition according to which there is a direct relationship between morphology and semantics, López argues that conditions for DOM are created in syntax by means of scrambling. Thus, there is a connection between morphology and syntax in that differentially marked direct objects undergo short scrambling out of the VP and into a vP-internal position. Finally, López builds upon the theory of semantics he adopts, i.e. Chung and Ladusaw (2004, 2006), a theory which enables him to pair syntactic position with modes of semantic composition. Thus, indefinite objects that stay in situ may only be composed by Restrict, whereas indefinites that scramble may only be interpreted by means of choice functions.

The second half of this chapter is devoted to Spanish indefinite objects. López builds upon various empirical difficulties raised by these DPs. One important conclusion, however, is that marked indefinites may be specific and outscope sentential operators, while their unmarked counterparts may not. By so doing, Spanish indefinites seem to parallel the behavior of Maori indefinites. Thus, Maori seems to have two indefinite determiners: *he* and *tētahi*. The former determiner behaves similarly to unmarked objects in Spanish in that it can only take narrow scope with respect to other operators whereas the latter may either take narrow or wide scope. Drawing on the similar behavior of Spanish and Maori indefinites, López proposes that the analysis for Maori indefinites as put forth by Chung and Ladusaw (2004, 2006) be adopted for Spanish indefinites i.e. unmarked indefinite objects are composed by means of Restrict, just like *he* indefinites, while marked indefinites are composed by means of choice functions, along the same lines as *tētahi* indefinites.

The objective of Chapter 2, “Scrambling and Differential Object Marking” (pp. 31-68), is the developing of a syntax for indefinite objects. López distinguishes between indefinites that scramble to a low position and indefinites that do not. The former set contains a subset of indefinites which are differentially object marked by means of A (they have to appear in the right environmental conditions).

The two sets of indefinites differ with respect to the way in which they are case marked. Following the lines of Chomsky (1995), López assumes that accusative case originates in v: unmarked indefinites which stay in situ satisfy case requirements by incorporating into the lexical verb which further incorporates into v. On the other hand, scrambled indefinites (both marked and unmarked) get case by moving into a Specifier position governed by v. López assumes that there is a functional projection, αP^4 of the applicative type, between vP and VP. Marked objects undergo

found to the left of these adverbs must have left the VP, while objects found to the right of these adverbs are within the VP. The former, Diesing claims, have strong readings as they have been scrambled into the Restrictor.

² Reinhart (1997) argues that weak quantifiers are handled by means of the *choice function* semantic mechanism: if indefinite DPs are properties of type $\langle e, t \rangle$, a choice function lifts this DP to type $\langle e \rangle$. The indefinite can then be composed by Functional Application.

³ The proponents working within this tradition have noticed that many languages may morphologically mark the direct object or the lexical verb with an interpretive end, i.e. to render the DP in question specific. Thus, these approaches link a piece of morphology to an interpretation.

⁴ See Travis (1992), Koizumi (1995), Baker and Collins (2006), Travis (2010). αP is either looked upon as an applicative function introducing the indirect object into the argument structure of the verb (Marantz 1993, Pylkkänen 2006 a.o.) or as a head related to inner aspect: telicity or boundedness.

short scrambling to *Spec α* whereas unmarked objects satisfy their case requirement through incorporation. Indefinites may be merged as KP⁵ or may have a smaller nominal structure #P. KPs have to move to *Spec α* in order to be assigned case by *v* under government. #Ps on the other hand, incorporate into *V* and their case requirements are satisfied only after *V* further incorporates into *v*. This analysis accounts for a set of data such as: the obligatoriness of accusative marker *A* with arguments of clause union, small clauses and PRO-controlling objects (the DP cannot satisfy case requirements through incorporation but has to move to *Spec α* where it receives case under government from *v*; since it has to raise for case reasons, the DP must be a KP) as well as for the impossibility of this marker with bare plurals (which incorporate into *V* and can only be #Ps).

The last section of this chapter is devoted to DOM distribution with a focus on Spanish *A*. Working within the framework of Distributed Morphology, López considers the accusative marker *A* as a functional category with an array of features. In the case of languages such as Hindi, Spanish or Persian, DOM is a vocabulary item which gets inserted in *K*; when it comes to languages such as Kiswahili, DOM is a morphological item which attaches to *v*. Finally, in the case of Romanian, DOM is an item of vocabulary inserted in *K* and accompanied by a clitic which attaches to the verb. DOM is a matter of defining a context for Vocabulary insertion. DOM is constrained by language-specific properties which actually translate as features which can be found in the immediate local environment of *K*. Under this approach some irregular instances of DOM, which previous analyses could not account for, become unsurprising: e.g. in Catalan, where only pronouns are differentially marked, the rule that spells out *K* specifies that *K* may only be spelled out if it selects a pronoun.

Chapter 3, “Scrambling and semantic composition” (pp. 69-100), focuses on the syntax – semantics mapping. Against previous accounts (mentioned above) which argue in favour of a direct, rigid syntactic representation – semantic interpretation mapping, López proposes that what the syntactic configuration does is to restrict the variety of possible modes of semantic composition; this restriction will then limit the range of semantic representations.

Thus, the connection between displacement and interpretation is an indirect one: the difference between moved vs. *in-situ* indefinites amounts to different modes of semantic composition i.e. the former get type-shifted by a choice function variable and undergo Function Application, while the latter are composed by Restrict⁶. This difference concerning the semantic composition of indefinite objects may have consequences on their interpretation: choice functions allow for wide scope and this may explain why differentially marked DPs in Spanish (which scramble) may outscope quantifiers, negation and the conditional operator.

Scrambled indefinites are KPs while *in-situ* indefinites may have a smaller structure #P. #Ps are of type $\langle e, t \rangle$ and incorporate into *V* if merged as complements of *V*. #Ps are interpreted by means of Restrict. As for KPs, *K* is associated to a semantic function⁷: it is a choice function variable *f* which triggers type shifting of the indefinite object from type $\langle e, t \rangle$ to type $\langle e \rangle$. The properties of choice functions enable wide and intermediate scope.

Chapter 4, “Crosslinguistic Predictions” (pp. 101-154), extends the analysis presented in chapters 2 and 3, which were mainly focused on Spanish data, to other five languages: Persian, Hindi, Kiswahili, Romanian and German. López looks at a wide range of data in order to verify the predictions arrived at in the previous two chapters: only marked DPs may be specific and may have wide scope, marked nominal phrases scramble, unmarked indefinites incorporate into *V* a.o. These predictions are shown to verify to a large extent for the languages under discussion.

⁵ In Spanish *K* is spelled out as the accusative marker *A*.

⁶ López adopts Kratzer’s (1996) semantics for transitivity enriched with Chung and Ladusaw’s (2004) proposals.

⁷ There is thus a direct connection between (short) scrambling and choice functions.

For reasons of space I will only focus on the analysis López unfolds for Romanian. DOM-ed indefinites receive the marker *pe*, which in López's terms is the spell-out of K. *Pe*-marked indefinites are shown to scramble (as proved by c-command tests). With respect to scope, López argues that marked indefinites are interpreted by choice function, while unmarked indefinites may be subject to QR. The fact QR applies for this latter class of indefinites constitutes a new factor to the analysis: as pointed out by López, these DPs may be type-shifted to $\langle\langle e, t \rangle\rangle$ and moved to SpecT by means of QR (see examples 116-118, on p. 143). Thus, In Romanian, both unmarked and marked indefinites may take wide scope and this may be the result of applying either QR (for the former) or choice function (for the latter). However, we take issue with the data concerning scope: more specifically, with the situation described on page 142, example 115, where the unmarked indefinite *un filozof* 'a philosopher' is said to only have narrow scope. In fact, we believe that this indefinite can outscope the conditional. Therefore the conclusion that only *pe* marked indefinites include a choice function variable as they may take scope outside a conditional island is weakened.

Nevertheless, apart from this very minor observation, *Indefinite Objects. Scrambling, Choice Functions and Differential Marking* is a very interesting and valuable contribution to the field of indefinite object marking with at least two strong points: as already stated, syntax-semantics mapping is done via type-shifting, a phenomenon which may explain several syntactic and semantic problems concerning indefinite object marking, such as morphological marking or cross-linguistic interpretation of indefinites. The analysis of DOM represents another important advantage of this approach as it seems to account for some irregular instances of differential marking which previous analyses did not account for.

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Mihaela Tănase-Dogaru. 2013. *The Syntax of Quality and Quantity in Romanian. Prepositional Binominal Structures*. Bucharest: Editura Universității din București. 164 pp.

Reviewed by Anca Sevcenco*

The book under review here is a monograph on syntactic structures that refer to quality (binominal qualitatives) and quantity (pseudo-partitives and noun-cardinal DPs) in Romanian for which it proposes a unifying analysis in terms of base generation rather than movement, i.e. predicate inversion (Corver 1998).

The book opens with an “Introduction” (pp. 9-10) that spells out its main goal. It comprises three chapters of various lengths, further divided in sub-sections, and ends with a set of general conclusions.

Chapter 1, “The syntax of quantity in Romanian: Pseudopartitive constructions” (pp. 11-70), concentrates on the syntax of Romanian pseudo-partitive structures. It argues that the N1 de N2 order is base-generated and analyses the structure as a single double-headed extended projection, centred on a semi-lexical head (N1) and also a lexical head (N2), that denotes a single referent. It also considers the role of the preposition *de* that connects the two nominal elements and conjectures that this preposition is an abstract Genitive case assigner.

Chapter 2, “The syntax of quantity in Romanian: Cardinal-noun constructions” (pp. 71-112), discusses the syntax of cardinal-noun structures. The author tackles this topic because cardinal-noun structures denote quantity, but also because she mentions the existence of a structural similarity between cardinal-noun and pseudo-partitives structures. She favours a differentiated treatment for cardinal-noun sequences, following the spirit of previous analyses on this line (Corver and Zwarts 2006, Danon 2012, a.o.). More specifically, she proposes that Romanian cardinals from one to nineteen are represented by a specifier – complement configuration, whereas cardinals higher than 19 instantiate a head – complement structure.

Chapter 3, “The syntax of quality in Romanian: Binominal qualitative constructions” (pp. 113-152), focuses on another nominal structure which features the preposition *de*, as linker, i.e. the binominal qualitative. Two types of binominal qualitatives are argued to be present in Romanian: single and double DP qualitatives. The author proposes that the order of the nominal elements involved is also base-generated and not derived by movement (predicate raising), on a par with the order evinced in pseudo-partitives. The preposition behaves as an abstract genitive case assigner in this structure as well. Single DP qualitatives are analysed as single double-headed extended projections (just like pseudo-partitives). Double DP qualitatives, on the other hand, are argued to be structures in which periphery P features are checked in an outer D.

The book represents a welcome contribution to a linguistic domain that has been extensively studied in the Romanian generative grammar tradition, the syntax and semantics of the DP. It is of interest to specialists who work on this topic from various perspectives (diachronic, the minimalist program). Also, graduate students in linguistics might find it interesting because, in addition to the proposed analysis for the structures that express quality and quantity, the book also reviews the previous literature pertaining to this research domain.

* University of Bucharest, Department of English, anca.sevcenco@g.unibuc.ro.

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Address for correspondence

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